

Use of Immunofluorescence in the Diagnosis of Virus Infections. By P. S. Gardner. (Audio-tape slide programme; catalogue number 76-97; 34 slides and cassette; 33 minutes. Cost: can be obtained on loan (28 days for £2.16 including postage one-way and VAT. Programme can be purchased by bona fide medical personnel or organisations for £12.58 including postage and VAT)). Chelmsford: Medical Recording Service Foundation.

This audio-tape slide programme has both the advantage and the limitations of production by an experienced enthusiast. For technicians and virologists it contains insufficient procedural detail and would be improved for beginners by having diagrams of procedures at the expense of immunofluorescent illustrations. On the other hand, the technical detail is too great for clinicians who are less aware of limitations such as inability to detect unexpected or unknown infections for which one has no antisera. Rapid diagnosis can be useful in a few clinical management decisions. For survey purposes and postal diagnosis the advantage is simplicity and practicability. Understandably, most of the examples described are respiratory infections; no emphasis is given to the outstanding advance in rabies diagnosis made by immunofluorescent methods which have replaced the classical staining procedures.

The slides are crisp but with colour variations due no doubt to difficulties in reproduction. They would be improved by having arrow indicators of positive reactions, by including explanatory illustrations of the characteristic distributions of specific fluorescence to which the voice refers, and by having each slide numbered on the projected transparency in case the projectionist misses his cue or confuses 'point 5' with 'slide 5'. The sound track is satisfactory, its content systematically ordered and logical, but the tape reviewed tailed off into unedited comments about a correction to 'page 7, line 6'.

Despite these criticisms, this is a creditable production and will be useful in my own department for instruction and as a basis for seminars.

N. R. GRIST

Detection and Measurement of Circulating Soluble Antigen-antibody Complexes and Anti-DNA Antibodies. *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases*. Supplement 1, January 1977. Volume 36. Edited by R. N.

Maini and E. J. Holborow. (Pp. v + 142; illustrated; £4.50.) London: British Medical Association. 1977.

Two growth areas in immunopathology are covered by this significant publication. A *Supplement to the Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases*, it reports the proceedings of two important meetings about two important topics, the detection of soluble antigen-antibody complexes and the measurement of anti-DNA antibodies. It asks a lot of questions and even provides a few answers. The workshop on immune complexes makes fascinating reading and is likely to be of considerable value to those involved in the technical aspects of this subject. Dr Hay and his colleagues list all the qualities required of an immune complex assay while Professor Soothill examines all those available and, by highlighting their defects, points the way for further research.

The second half of the book is devoted to a laboratory workshop on the detection and measurement of anti-DNA antibodies. This is well described both by the workshop participants and by the rapporteurs. The technical aspects of the assays are given in considerable detail as are the workshop results.

This is a valuable document which should be read by anyone with a practical interest in immunopathology. Furthermore, it illustrates the very best solution to the problem of publishing the proceedings of workshops and meetings as a supplement to an authoritative journal.

G. CURRIE

International Classification of Diseases for Oncology. (Pp. xxii + 131; £5.60.) WHO: Geneva. 1976. (Available from HM Stationery Office.)

This book is a list of the coding figures for anatomical sites of the body (topography) and tumour histopathological classification including behaviour (eg, benign, in situ, malignant, etc) and grading. It is an extension of chapter II (Neoplasm) of the *Ninth Revision of the WHO International Classification of Diseases* and incorporates the International Histological Classification of Tumours series ('Blue Books') also published by the WHO.

Having successfully used the Systematized Nomenclature of Pathology (SNOP) scheme for classification purposes, I was encouraged to read in the introduction that the WHO coding system is based on

SNOP. However, in practice there is little resemblance between the two systems, and my carefully recorded numbers cannot readily be adapted to the WHO scheme despite assertions in the introductory text to the contrary.

The main merit in this classification system seems to be that it will facilitate a meaningful comparative study of tumours, especially those classified by international experts and enumerated in the 'Blue Books' series. When faithfully applied, the coding system will provide invaluable information about the worldwide incidences and types of various tumours. Centres specialising in oncology, therefore, should be encouraged to use this book for the recording of information which will be of use when statistics are required, and the book will be an essential part of their reference libraries.

P. A. TROTT

Immunology of the Rheumatic Diseases. No. 7 in Current Topics in Immunology Series. By R. N. Maini, D. N. Glass, and J. T. Scott. General Editor Professor J. L. Turk. (Pp. xiii + 146; illustrated; £5.95.) London: Edward Arnold. 1977.

This book is another in the continuing spate of publications concerned with clinical immunology and its application to different diseases. The prospective buyer has no choice but to apply some sort of 'consumer guide' test based on the authors' description of their intended readership. Their aims are formidably ambitious since it is the stated intention to include 'in particular, practising rheumatologists, immunologists, post-graduate students, physicians, pathologists and research workers'. The criteria for evaluating this book must, therefore, include those which would be considered by all these disparate potential purchasers. In fact, there is only one group of readers whom this slender volume could possibly satisfy, namely, clinicians who want a fairly concise survey of the present state of immunology as applied to the connective tissue diseases. The word 'immunology' should be emphasised, because in other areas the book is often misleading. Thus, there is no evidence that oncornaviruses are primarily responsible for the autoimmune diseases of NZB mice, and the relation of these viruses to human disease is far more complex than the authors indicate. As an introductory primer, the book is reasonably priced and agreeable to read, infelicitous phrases such as 'the use of an anti-T cell antiserum was